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FEDERAL STUDENT AID

2006-2007

**Quality Assurance Program
Sampling Guide**

FOREWORD

Are you sure that all of your disbursements of federal, state, and institutional need-based aid resources are based on accurate Institutional Student Information Record (ISIR) data?

Do you relish explaining the rationale for your institutional verification criteria to students who question why they have been singled out?

Are you looking forward to your next program audit?

If you answered “No” to any of these questions you would benefit from finding out more about the effectiveness of your institutional verification selection criteria. Ignorance may be bliss to those without responsibility, but as a financial aid professional you are accountable for the proper stewardship of public and private resources you manage.

Would you like to be able to address questions of auditors and students with a solid empirical basis for your verification procedures?

Would you like to know what types of students your current institutional verification efforts are missing?

Would you like to identify efficient means of improving your verification efforts?

If you answered, “Yes” to any of these questions, the sampling procedures outlined in this document will help you accomplish these goals. By confirming the accuracy of ISIR information supplied by a random sample of your aid applicants you will be in the position to defend your verification practices and improve the accuracy of the aid awards you disburse in the future.

INTRODUCTION

The Quality Assurance (QA) Program requires participating schools to draw a random sample of aid applicants who are eligible for need-based aid at your institution for the upcoming award year 2006-07 based on their initial transaction. This document will prepare you to carry out this exercise with as little disruption to your regular processing of aid as possible.

Federal Student Aid understands that drawing a quality control sample will impose a non-trivial burden on the schools participating in the QA Program. Therefore, sampling is required only every other year. This approach balances the need of maintaining up to date information on the effectiveness of institutional verification with the competing demands placed on financial aid office staff. An every-other-year approach will also allow institutions to fully implement changes stemming from analysis before data are collected again.

This document contains four sections. The first section provides background information both for readers who might be new to the QA Program and for “old hands” as well. The remaining text is devoted to answering the utilitarian questions that may be your mind on right now. These questions are:

Why do I have to sample?

What do I have to do?

When do I have to do it?

By providing the answers to these questions, we hope this document reduces any anxiety you may be feeling toward sampling. We also hope that this document will serve as a helpful guide as you plan to select your sample in Spring 2006 and verify your sample of 2006-07 ISIR records this coming summer.

BACKGROUND

The Quality Assurance (QA) Program of the U.S. Department of Education (ED) helps schools manage the delivery of Title IV funds at participating postsecondary schools. In lieu of following federally prescribed verification of institutional student information records (ISIR) for applicants “flagged” by the Central Processing System (CPS), schools participating in the QA Program are empowered to develop their *own institutional* process of verifying the accuracy of ISIR data. The information on ISIR records reflects student responses on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The ISIR data are used to calculate the students’ expected family contribution (EFC) toward their postsecondary expenses. The difference between the total price of attending a specific college or university and a student’s EFC determines his or her eligibility for need-based Federal Student Aid programs.

The ISIR Analysis Tool (the “Tool”) was developed to allow postsecondary schools to analyze the changes made to ISIR data resulting from verification in terms of their impact on EFC and Pell Grant eligibility.

By identifying the ISIR data fields and the types of students most likely to experience a change in aid eligibility, analysis supported by the Tool allows schools to fine tune their own verification process. The Tool compares two ISIR transactions, the initial and the paid-on transactions. Because multiple ISIR fields may change between the two transactions, the Tool cannot establish a direct causal connection between a change in a particular data element and the corresponding change in EFC or Pell Grant eligibility. Instead, the Tool is designed to do the following:

- Identify the relative frequency of changes in ISIR fields;
- Identify the corresponding frequency of changes in the EFC and Pell Grant eligibility; and

Determine (in light of the analysis) which user- defined sub groups of students should be targeted by institutional verification.

This manual is your guide to sampling in the QA Program. Under this approach, sampling will allow you to confirm the accuracy of verification procedures without relinquishing the timing and data advantages ushered in by the Tool. In essence, you will get the best of both worlds. Let us turn now to answering the questions that may be on your mind.

WHY DO I HAVE TO SAMPLE?

First and foremost, documenting the accuracy of ISIR information for students not normally selected for verification is the only way schools can find out what their institutional verification procedures may be missing. The only way to know for sure whether or not ISIR information is correct is to verify it. This piece of information is simply not available in the ISIRs used for routine aid processing for the students that are not verified.

While schools need to examine the accuracy of ISIR data among students they don't usually verify, they do not have to look at every single aid applicant. We realize that most QA Program schools would balk at conducting 100 percent verification of ISIR data. By carefully following the sampling rules spelled out in the "What do I have to do?" section, schools will be able to make valid generalizations, from a minimum random sample of relatively few (350) students, to their entire aid population. These rules must be followed carefully in order for the data to be representative of a school's aid population.

While schools will be asked to collect federal verification documentation from students they might not otherwise verify, the amount of additional data entry required will be minimal. In fact, the only pieces of information that schools will need to maintain are: 1) social security numbers, 2) first two characters of last names, 3) transaction numbers for the initial and paid-on ISIRs for students, and 4) institutional verification status of

students who are randomly selected in the sample. Schools will have ready access to all the ISIR data they need for analysis from records that are maintained on the ISIR Data mart.

Why a minimum sample of 350?

Some of the more “statistically hip” schools may wonder why we have set the minimum sample size at 350. In setting the minimum sample size at 350, Federal Student Aid is attempting to balance the competing desires of collecting enough information to support meaningful analysis and conclusions while minimizing the burden of sampling placed on schools. We also tried to anticipate a fair degree of attrition from the sample of aid applications to the final population of interested aid recipients.

There are four main factors that influence setting the appropriate sample size:

- The amount of variation in the outcome of interest;
- The level of precision desired in the analysis of data;
- The level of statistical significance desired; and
- The size of the population from which the sample is drawn.

All else being equal, the greater the variation in the measure(s) of interest, the greater precision in measurement, the more statistical certainty, and the larger the population, the more cases you need to sample.

For a previous award year, Federal Student Aid contractors conducted a power analysis of the number of ISIR records that QA schools would need to sample given a variety of assumptions. They focused on two outcome measures of interest, changes to EFC and changes to Pell Grant Eligibility. They based estimates for the variation in these two measures on data collected from QA Program schools that participated in a pilot study. Among these schools, 44 percent of the records experienced a change to EFC and 30 percent experienced a change in Pell Grant eligibility. The tables below indicate alternative assumptions for the level of precision desired and the size of the student aid

population from which the sample is drawn, using the results of the power analysis. They assumed a constant statistical significance level of .05 for all calculations.

Table 1: Sample size needed to detect differences in changes to EFC with the indicated level of precision and population size

Population Size	1 Percentage Point	5 Percentage Points	10 Percentage Points
Infinite	9452	378	95
20000	6419	371	94
10000	4859	364	94
5000	3270	352	93
1000	904	275	86
500	475	216	80
100	99	79	49

Table 2: Sample size needed to detect differences in changes to Pell Grant eligibility with the indicated level of precision and population size

Population Size	1 Percentage Point	5 Percentage Points	10 Percentage Points
Infinite	8113	325	81
20000	5772	319	81
10000	4479	314	80
5000	3094	305	80
1000	890	245	75
500	471	197	70
100	99	77	45

They used these two tables when setting the minimum sample size at 350. QA Program schools vary in terms of how many students they deliver aid to. However, nearly all would fall between 1,000 and 20,000 aid applicants. Concentrating on the moderate precision level of five percentage points, the power analysis finds that appropriate sample sizes would be between 275 and 371 for examining changes to EFC and 245 and 319 for examining change to Pell Grant eligibility. In order to minimize burden on schools, they based our sample size on the Pell Grant eligibility analysis. They inflated this range to 350 cases in order to allow for the expected attrition that will occur from the population of applications being sampled before it becomes the population of interest (aid recipients).

Please note, schools with fewer than 1,000 aid applicants should set their sample size to

20 percent of their aid population. Contact your QA Program regional representative if you have any questions.

WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO?

Federal Student Aid will require each school participating in the QA Program to perform seven activities as part of the sampling process. We stress that these sampling activities are to be *in addition* to normal institutional verification efforts. Schools participating in the QA Program are required to verify all students who meet their institutional selection criteria and maintain the necessary documentation to support their verification activities. The following table identifies the extra steps associated with this sampling process and reveals that only the first four steps constitute “new work” for participants in the QA Program.

TABLE 3: Seven Required Steps of Sampling

Step	Sample Year Only Activities	Every Year Activities
1	Complete Sampling Plan Worksheet available at http://ifap.ed.gov/qualityassurance	
2	Randomly select at least 350 non duplicate student ISIR records from your aid applicant population that demonstrate financial need, i.e., $EFC < \text{cost of attendance}$.	
3	Require each student drawn into the sample to complete the applicable federal verification worksheet by placing a hold on their aid disbursement until they comply.	
4	Submit ALL changes stemming from the sample verification process that exceed Federal tolerance through the central processor. Keep track of transaction number of corrected ISIRs.	
5		Update and set school verification flags in the Tool.
6		Analyze changes to ISIR information within your

		sample with the ISIR Analysis Tool.
7		Document and apply the results of your analysis in improving your institutional verification procedures.

We expand on each of these steps below.

Sampling Plan Worksheet

Before embarking on your sampling requirement it is essential that you plan for each of these activities. As we will discuss further in the “When do I do it?” section, schools will need to tailor the timing of their sampling, documentation, and analysis activities according to their unique circumstances. Despite the need to accommodate different schedules, it is important that each school have a schedule.

Federal Student Aid has prepared a Sampling Plan Worksheet that will help schools make and stick to their schedule. Schools will enter an estimated timeline for completing each of the sampling steps on the worksheet. Schools will update their progress as milestones are reached over the course of the spring and summer. Federal Student Aid will ask schools to share their sampling plan with their QA Regional Representative by **March 15, 2006** to ensure that activities are on schedule and to identify schools that may be in need of technical assistance.

Randomly Sample a Minimum of 350 Applicants with Financial Need

We are requiring every school to randomly sample at least 350 of their aid applicants who are eligible for need-based aid. Schools may decide to sample more, but they must place a hold on aid disbursements to all students sampled until they complete a federal verification worksheet.

While attrition from the original sample will decrease the statistical power of subsequent

analysis, it will not pose a problem in terms of inferring results from the sample data to the population of interest. Title IV schools are responsible for the accuracy of the aid awards they disburse, not for the accuracy of information on every ISIR that contains their school's identification code. Therefore, the population that schools are ultimately interested in analyzing is their aid recipients—not applicants. Applicants without a paid-on transaction—a disbursement of aid—are deleted from the Tool's database during the validation process. Therefore, the loss of these cases from the original sample does not threaten the validity of subsequent analysis.

It is essential that schools select a random sample that is representative of their entire population receiving need-based aid. As we are directing schools to complete a verification process prior to disbursing aid to sampled students, Federal Student Aid will allow schools to exclude aid recipients who apply late in the process from the sample. However, if a sizable proportion of your aid population (more than 20 percent) applies for and receives assistance after the first session of your academic year has begun, you will need to divide your sample across your multiple enrollment windows.

The first step in drawing a random sample is to create a distinct list of all people eligible for need-based financial aid based on their initial ISIR data. There are multiple software packages, for example, SPSS, SAS, Excel, even some aid processing systems that you can use to draw a random sample of 350 from this distinct applicant population list. These software packages vary in how simple they make the process, but all are essentially following the same conceptual steps. First they divide 350 (or any other desired sample size) by the total number of people on the distinct applicant list. Then, they multiply the result of this division by 100 to get the percentage of cases you need to sample. Next, they assign each person on the list a random number between 0 and 100. Finally they select all cases that have a random number equal to or less than the percentage of cases you need.

You do not need to have a complete list of aid applicants demonstrating financial need

before you begin sampling. You do need to have a realistic estimate for the ultimate number of applicants who would be on a complete list if you want to draw multiple random samples of your population as you receive ISIRs. The number of need-based aid recipients your school had last year should suffice for an estimated total. If you built your sample in this fashion, you must sample the same percentage of cases in each draw and ensure that each student be exposed to the risk of sampling only once.

It is desirable, to the extent possible, to exclude students who are denied or decline admission to your school from the distinct applicant population list before the sample is drawn. This will maximize the number of the 350 applicants sampled who will have paid on information to analyze. See the “When do I need to do it?” section of this document for more information about excluding people who decide not to attend your school, or are denied admission.

Finally, as you bring aid applications into your sample, keep track of whether or not each applicant would have been subjected to your institutional verification process. The method for identifying these records is to set the School Verification Flag within the Student Listing Page on the Tool’s homepage.

Verify Before Disbursing Aid

Ideally, schools will confirm the information called for by the applicable (dependent or independent) federal verification worksheet for any student selected into the sample prior to disbursing aid to that student. Schools may, however, make an initial aid disbursement prior to completing verification. Schools that do not complete verification prior to disbursement face potential institutional liability for any over-award(s) of aid discovered that couldn’t be collected from the aid recipient(s).

Schools are not required to verify applicants who decide to attend another school, decide to forego college, or decide to attend your school without financial assistance. Therefore, the number of applicants that will need to supply this information may wind up being less than 350. We discuss ways to minimize this type of attrition in the “When do I need to

do it?” section of this document, but schools should not worry about “losing” cases in this manner and should not attempt to identify replacements to meet 350.

To the degree possible, schools should treat students selected into their random sample no differently than those selected for normal verification. Students do not need to be informed about the reason why they need to supply confirmatory documentation of the information they supplied on their FAFSA.

Submit Changes to the CPS

Schools may apply the same \$400 tolerance level used in federal verification when submitting changes to ISIR data detected during the sample. This tolerance applies to the result of adding adjusted gross income and untaxed income together and then subtracting federal taxes paid. If the difference in the results of this calculation using initial compared to confirmed information is \$400 or less, schools do not have to submit the new data through the CPS. This will allow schools to exclude changes to ISIR data that are unlikely to affect aid eligibility. However, all changes to the number of family members in college and household size need to be submitted.

Generally, schools are only required to submit such changes to ISIR information if they result in a change to Pell Grant eligibility. However, in order to be able to analyze all of the meaningful changes detected in the sample, you will need to submit all of these changes that exceed the \$400 tolerance level through the CPS. This is the only way that an ISIR record reflecting that change will be generated and therefore be available for analysis.

In order to access the correct ISIR transaction when it comes time to analyze the data, schools need to keep a record of all the transaction numbers for the ISIRs that were corrected based on the sample exercise. You will need this piece of information to ensure that the correct data is extracted from the ISIR Data Mart. For purposes of analysis, any ISIR transaction that occurs after the sample-based verification effort is completed should be ignored, even if it reflects an actual change in student circumstances. However,

schools are required to resolve any conflicting data even if the record will not be included in the sample.

Upload Data and Apply Institutional Verification Profiles

One reason Federal Student Aid is requiring schools to conduct a sample is to support meaningful analysis at the Title IV program level, and to support ongoing initiatives to reduce improper payments in the Pell Grant Program.

As a result, Federal Student Aid requires that you upload your ISIR data and identify records that met your institutional verification criteria by setting the School Verification Flag within the Student Listing prior to the data collection effort. Schools should keep track of the institutional verification status of the applications that are drawn into the sample. That is, would the ISIR in question be subjected to institutional verification if it had not been sampled? This will allow schools to easily set the School Verification Flag in the Tool to identify such records. We will return to this topic in the “When do I need to do it?” section of this guidebook.

Analyze Your Data

The primary reason Federal Student Aid is requiring schools to conduct the sample is to support more meaningful analysis with the Tool and strengthen verification efforts overall. Federal Student Aid recognizes that schools have limited time available for analysis. The Tool, which schools will use to analyze their sample data, will include eight standard reports and filtering capabilities that will allow schools to begin their analyses without going through a cumbersome set up process. Schools will still be able to customize their analyses to fit their needs, but Federal Student Aid has responded to school requests to make analyses that do not vary across schools more readily available in the Tool. The enhancements made to the Tool over the last two cycles have made the tool more intuitive and user friendly. The ISIR Analysis Tool Guide provides step by step instructions for using the Tool, including running reports and interpreting results is available on the Quality Assurance Program website at <http://ifap.ed.gov/qualityassurance>. Please note that the current Tool Guide available is

specific to the 2005-06 version of the Tool. The 2006-07 ISIR Analysis Tool Guide will be available in the spring of 2006.

Apply the Results of Your Analysis

The purpose of analyzing changes with the Tool is to make improvements in your institution's verification practices. Schools should explicitly plan for how they will apply the results of the analysis of changes in 2006-07 ISIR information to the verification procedures they will employ in 2007-08 or 2008-09. During this process schools should document and be ready to share the rationale for the enhancements they employ with their QA Program representative. Schools should also continue to work collaboratively with Federal Student Aid to improve the ability of the Tool to produce the types of analysis that support improvements in verification.

WHEN DO I NEED DO TO IT?

Federal Student Aid understands that schools will need flexibility in terms of timing the sample of their financial aid applications. We recognize that these steps could potentially complicate institutional recruitment efforts or call upon the time of otherwise committed staff members. Therefore, Federal Student Aid is setting only two mandatory deadlines. Schools are required to complete a Sampling Plan Worksheet by March 15, 2006 **and** have their database ready for analysis (identify the random sample population, upload ISIRs in the Tool, and set School Verification Flags) by November 30, 2006. Schools will customize their own intervening deadlines in their planning worksheet.

The table below provides schools with the broad timeframes available for completing the quality control sampling process. Note particularly that there is a seven-month window for drawing the sample and an eight-month window for collecting verification worksheets and submitting changes through the CPS. We discuss the factors schools should consider in deciding how to schedule their work.

Table 4: Timeframe for Completing Seven Required Steps

Step	Description	Timeframe
1	Complete Sampling Plan Worksheet available at http://ifap.ed.gov/qualityassurance	January 15-March 15, 2006
2	Randomly select at least 350 non-duplicate ISIR records from your aid applicant population that demonstrates financial need.	January 15 through July 31, 2006
3	Compel each student drawn into the sample to complete the applicable federal verification worksheet by placing a hold on their aid disbursement until they comply.	January 15 through August 31, 2006
4	Submit ALL changes stemming from the sample verification process (that exceed Federal tolerance) through the central processor. Keep track of transaction number of corrected ISIRs.	January 15 through August 31, 2006
5	Upload ISIRs, and update and/or set school verification flags.	No later than November 30, 2006
6	Analyze changes to ISIR information within your sample with the ISIR Analysis Tool.	October 1 through December 1, 2006
7	Apply the results of your analysis in improving your institutional verification procedures.	November through December 2006

Sampling Plan Worksheet

Schools should try to complete their sampling plan worksheet as soon as possible, **but must have it completed by March 15, 2006**. While it is important for schools to set up a schedule as soon as possible, they should take the time to craft a comprehensive plan. Establishing specific dates for reaching milestones is a critical component of this planning. QA Program Representatives will provide technical assistance, as well as follow up with schools to ensure sampling activities have been initiated and are on schedule.

Randomly Sample a Minimum of 350 Applicants with Financial Need

Schools should limit their minimum sample of 350 students who demonstrate financial need. Schools may choose to sample ISIR records as soon as they begin receiving them from the CPS in early January, or wait until some point later in the process. There are benefits to either strategy, depending on your population or routine verification process. Sampling from the very beginning lets schools avoid having to ask students who were previously subjected to institutional verification for additional information. Multiple requests for confirmatory information have the potential of exasperating students and their parents. Sampling from the very beginning will also allow (force) schools to integrate the sampling exercise into their normal operations and spread the burden imposed across the spring and summer. This type of integration may make it easier for schools to manage the work imposed by the sample.

Conversely, waiting to sample will allow schools to remove more of the applicants who will not be attending their school from the sampling pool. As the spring progresses, schools will be increasingly able to identify applicants who will attend their school in the fall. Schools will make offers of admissions to a subset of applicants. A subset of these admitted students will choose to accept admission at your school. Waiting until the final roster of students is clearer minimizes the proportion of sampled ISIRs that will drop out of the population because they do not receive aid at your school.

If waiting is not practical, schools may, but are not required to, increase the sample size beyond the minimum of 350 to account for an expected level of attrition. For example, if only half of the students from whom a particular school received an ISIR file from last year ended up attending in the fall, then a school might want to double their sample size to 700. This would help ensure that the school would have sufficient data to analyze in the fall after matriculation decisions work themselves out. The table below provides the number of cases that should be initially sampled if a school wants to have 350 cases to analyze. The Tool has the capacity to hold up to 1500 records. However, for the 2006-07

academic year, Quality Assurance Program schools will focus their analysis efforts on the verified sample of 350.

Table 5: Estimated initial sample size needed in order to ensure 350 ISIRs for the analysis sample

Percentage of applicants who end up attending your school	Initial sample size to ensure minimum of 350 ISIRs to analyze
25%	1400
33%	1061
50%	700
67%	525
75%	467
90%	389

Schools should also consider the following questions in deciding when to sample.

- When does institutional verification begin?
- What information does institutional verification confirm?
- How readily could the processing of randomly sampled applicants be integrated into existing verification efforts?
- When is information on admissions and acceptance available to the financial aid office?

There is no risk of having to make a second request for information from a previously verified student until institutional verification actually begins. If schools do not begin their institutional verification process until after some of the enrollment decisions are made, it would seem short sided not to use this information to restrict the sampling frame to only those still “at risk” of receiving aid.

If institutional verification confirms all the information requested by the federal verification worksheets, there will be no need to re-contact previously verified students who are subsequently drawn into the sample. Therefore, such schools are free to wait until the aid recipient population becomes quite clear, unless they want to integrate the sampling process into their normal operations for administrative reasons.

Depending upon the system the school uses to process aid, it might be quite easy or nearly impossible for schools to integrate the sample into their normal operations. Integrating the sample would be like adding a randomly generated verification flag to an existing institutional verification system.

Finally, schools will need data on admission and acceptance decisions no later than June if they want to use this information to restrict their sample frame. Schools need to be sure to leave enough time to verify ISIR information from selected students before they need to disburse aid in the fall. If data will not be available by June, or if the information will be extremely sketchy at this point in time, there is no added value waiting for it.

Verify Before Disbursing Aid

Federal Student Aid requires schools to confirm the information called for by the applicable (dependent or independent) federal verification worksheet information for any student selected into the sample. Federal Student Aid strongly encourages schools to do this prior to disbursing aid to these students. Failing to complete the verification process by the time classes start in the fall will not create “statistical problems,” but may result in adjustments to aid awards after initial disbursements have been made.

Schools are advised to schedule at least eight weeks to contact sampled students, collect completed federal verification worksheets, and resolve any discrepancies with existing ISIR data. This schedule assumes that at least one person in your aid office will be able to devote at least half time to this activity. If you are not planning to integrate the sample into your aid processing system, you will probably conduct most of the data verification during the summer months. Remember to allow for staff vacation plans when establishing your schedule.

Submit Changes To the CPS

In order to be able to analyze all of the meaningful changes detected during the sample, you will need to submit to the CPS any change from initial ISIR information uncovered by the collection of federal verification worksheets. Only changes that exceed the federal

verification \$400 threshold need to be submitted. See page 12 of this document for more detail.

You will need to keep track of the ISIR transaction number containing the correct information for later uploading into the Tool. Therefore, you may find it helpful to hold back in submitting the corrections of ISIR data stemming from the sample to the CPS, until you can do so collectively. This will make it easier to locate the transaction numbers for the corrected “paid-on” ISIRs, as they will all be from a relatively short time window. The Data Mart will store all 2006-07 ISIR data for the school, but having the specific transaction number of the paid-on transaction will allow schools to upload the right information for analysis. If a review of federal verification worksheets reveals no need to correct information, the “corrected” paid on transaction number is the same as the initial ISIR transaction number.

Upload Data and Set School Verification Flag

Prior to November 30, 2006, schools will have to: a) upload ISIR data into the Tool, b) specify, and c) set their school verification flags. As Federal Student Aid staff will have administrative rights to your online data, you will not have to go through the cumbersome process of “sending” your data in.

Analyze Your Data

Federal Student Aid estimates that a thorough analysis with the Tool will take at least a week or two of staff time. Schools should strive to identify a specific window of time during late October through mid- December 2006 when staff member(s) can devote a good deal of their time to this analysis. Schools should schedule their analysis in order to allow enough time to implement quality improvements for the subsequent award year.

Apply the Results of Your Analysis

As discussed above, schools need to schedule their analysis activities to allow Implementation time for quality improvements. As mentioned previously, a users guide for the ISIR Analysis Tool is currently available online at <http://ifap.ed.gov/qualityassurance>.

To ensure that an adequate amount of time is available, schools should estimate how much time it would take them to implement a moderate change to their verification system. By “moderate change” we mean the addition of a new verification criteria or a major revision to an existing one. Having an estimate for the amount of time a quality improvement of this magnitude takes will allow schools to schedule their analysis appropriately.

Summary Chart of Due Dates

Federal Student Aid recognizes that schools need flexibility in timing their sampling activities. While we encourage each and every QA participant to tailor their implementation of the sampling requirement in such a way as to minimize the disruption to the other activities going on in their financial aid offices, there are times when each activity needs to be done. The following table provides these deadlines.

Table 6: Summary Chart of Due Dates

Activity	Deadline
Sampling Plan Worksheet	January 15 – March 15 2006
Draw sample of at least 350 ISIRs	No later than July 31, 2006
Collect verification information according to Federal Verification Worksheet	In time to disburse aid on time
Submit all changes to CPS	In time to disburse aid on time
Upload data (initial and paid-on ISIRs) and set school verification flag	November 30, 2006
Analysis of changes to ISIR data	December 15, 2006
Apply results of analysis	Start of 2007-08 verification

The only exception to these deadlines would be for schools with rolling admission and multiple samples. In schools that are doing multiple samples, these deadlines apply only to their initial data collection effort prior to their first disbursement of Title IV aid.

This document summarizes the steps that your school must implement in order to select a random sample of Title IV applicants for the 2006-07 award year. Quality Assurance Program schools are required to select a random sample of applicants every other year. It is important to follow the steps outlined in this sampling guide to ensure that the sample you select is random and reflects your institutions applicant population. In addition, the data collected from the sample will help your institution make determinations about the effectiveness of current verification practices, and make adjustments and/or improvements to ensure that the right aid is going to the right student at the right time.